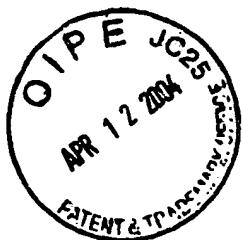


P20596.A16



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants : Minoru MATSUSHITA et al.

Mail Stop Issue Fee

Group Art Unit : 3739

Confirmation No.: 9618

Examiner : LEUBECKER, J. P.

Serial No : 09/848,301

Filed : May 4, 2001

For : FLEXIBLE TUBE FOR AN ENDOSCOPE

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir :

In response to the Notice of Allowability, mailed by the Patent and Trademark Office on January 12, 2004 and to the Statement of Reasons for Allowance attached thereto, Applicants wish to clarify the record with respect to the basis for the patentability of claims in the present application. In this regard, while Applicants do not disagree with the Examiner's indication that certain identified features are not disclosed by the references, Applicants submit that each of the claims in the present application recite a particular combination of features, and that the basis for patentability of each of these claims is based on the totality of the particular features recited therein.

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Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
Minoru MATSUSHITA et al.

Will. S. Lytle Reg. No.
Bruce H. Bernstein 41,568
Reg. No. 29,027

April 5, 2004
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191